

A
SERMON
PREACH'D
At *Little St. Helens,*
TO THE
SOCIETY
Attending the
Lord's-Day *Morning-Lecture,*
On the 28th of MAY, 1722.
BEING THE
BIRTH-DAY
Of our Most Gracious Sovereign
King GEORGE.

By WILLIAM TONG.

Publish'd at the Desire of those that heard it.

L O N D O N,
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PREACHED

At Little St. Helens,

TO THE

SOCIETY

Attending the

Lord's Day Morning School,

On the 28th of May 1793.

By the

BAPTIST-DAY

OF THE CHURCH OF LITTLE ST. HELENS

KING GEORGE

BY WILLIAM TONG.

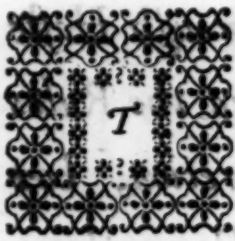
Printed at the Press of J. G. Smith, Little St. Helens.

1793



To those at whose Request this
Sermon was publish'd.

GENTLEMEN,

 *HE Unanimity which appeared in your candid Acceptance and Approbation of this plain Discourse, makes it very Evident, that you are none of those, who are justly blamed for shew-*

The Dedication.

ing their Discontent and Disaffection to our happy Establishment, and therefore it was less needful to you than it may to some others: I would hope there are not many of our Denomination, that have given into the scandalous Freedoms some have taken to arraign the Government; but it is too plain, an unjustifiable Liberty has been taken, and I believe it has given some Encouragement to our Common Enemies, to enter into fresh Designs against us, and this Consideration alone, must surely be sufficient to convince all that through Haste and Inadvertency, have broken the Rules of Duty, Decency and Discretion, how much Reason they have to blame themselves for it; if any Thing here said may prevail with all that heartily love
their

The Dedication.

their Country, to pray more for our Governors, and talk less against them, I shall easily bear the Censures which I expect from others: I must own, what I have observed my self, and more that I have heard from others, of that unruly Spirit that has too much prevailed of late, has not only made me afraid of what the Consequences may be to the Government it self; but of the evil Influence it may have upon all Manner of Order and good Rule among us. This untoward Spirit will be in Danger of entering into all private Relation, and those that take upon them to treat their Superiours with so much Disrespect, may teach their Children, and their Servants, to use them after the same unbecoming Manner, and then they will too late

The Dedication.

late see their Folly, in giving their Inferiors so bad an Example: To prevent this, as well as many other great Inconveniencies, I have been somewhat more Warm and Zealous on this Subject, than perhaps was expected from,

Gentlemen,

Your oblig'd Servant,

W. Tong.

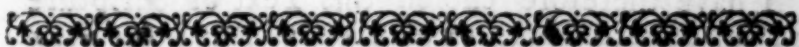


A

SERMON

Preach'd at

Little St. Helens, &c.



I TIM. 2. 1, 2.

I exhort therefore, that first of all Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving Thanks be made for all Men. For Kings and all in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life, in all Godliness and Honesty.



HE Custom which you of this Society have so long kept up, to meet together on the Birth Day of our Sovereign King George, in the Duties of religious Worship, can need no Apology, doubtless, while you manage

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nage it with your wonted Solemnity and Sobriety, it will be accepted of God, and approved by all good Men.

And if our gracious God, the *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, shall now afford us his favourable Presence, we shall know no Reason to envy those that are admitted into the Palaces of our Princes, there to celebrate this happy and memorable Day.

The Work to which you have now called me is, to direct you from the Word of God in the proper Duty of the Day; in this I shall endeavour to preserve the Character of a Gospel Minister, not assuming that of a Politician, to which I know, I have no Pretensions.

I have therefore chosen this Text of Scripture for the Subject of my Discourse, in which *St. Paul*, as an Apostle, exhorts *Timothy*, as an Assistant Evangelist, to put the Christian People in Mind how much it was their Duty to offer up solemn Addresses to God, as for all Men in general, so especially for Kings and all in Authority, that under them they might lead quiet and peaceable Lives in all Godliness and Honesty.

The illative Particle, *therefore*, refers to what we have before, in the Close of the first Chap. v. 18, 19. *This Charge I commit unto thee, Son Timothy, according to the Prophecies that went before of thee, that thou mightest war a good Warfare, holding Faith and a good Conscience; which some having put away, concerning Faith have made Shipwrack: Of whom is Hymene-*

us and Alexander, whom I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme: I exhort therefore, that Supplications and Prayers, &c.

By this it seems one considerable Part of Timothy's Warfare, was his contending with those that were making Shipwrack of the Faith and a good Conscience, and not content to abandon the great Articles of Christianity themselves, they proceeded to blaspheme them, and to revile, insult and abuse those that faithfully adhered to them.

This was indeed a deplorable Case, and call'd aloud for serious solemn Prayer; and that for all Men, that according to the declared Will of God, *ver. 4. They might be saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth*, and that those who had learned the Truth, as it is in Jesus, might continue and be confirmed in it; and that especially Prayers should be made for Kings and all in Authority; not that they should propagate Christianity by the Sword, but that they should defend and protect the peaceable Professors of it, from the Insolence and Blasphemy of those that were fallen off from it; for it has been generally observ'd, that one Apostate from the true Religion, has been more Malicious and Cruel, than Ten of its veteran Enemies.

This I take to be the true Connection of the Place, from which I now proceed to the subject Matter. *I exhort therefore, that Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks be made for all Men. For Kings, and all in Authority, that we may lead a*

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quiet and peaceable Life, in all Godliness and Honesty.

The Substance of which, as far as I am able to discern it, I would offer to you in the following Positions.

First, Solemn Prayer is one of the principal Duties of the Christian Life, and our best resort in Times of Danger.

It is one of the principal Duties of the Christian Life, and therefore *is first of all* to be regarded by us, it is *πρῶτον πάντων*, the first of all those Things that are essential to the Christian State, as Breathing is one of the first Symptoms of natural Life, and a principal Means of preserving that Life: So spiritual Breathings are the best Sign of spiritual Life; this was given to *Ananias* as a Proof of *Saul's* Conversion, that now *he prayed*, Acts 9. 11. Those that are New-born, in a spiritual Sense, will *desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby*, 1 Pet. 2. 2.

The natural Life is preserved by breathing in and breathing out; the divine Life, in the Soul of Man, is preserved by breathing in by Prayer, and breathing out by Praise. The *Spirit of Grace* ever was and will be a *Spirit of Supplication*, Zach. 12. 10. The Servants of God have always been a praying People, and God has been a God hearing Prayer ever since Men began to call upon the Name of the Lord, this is his Name and his Memorial in all Generations.

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This is our best resort in times of Danger; when either Religion or our Liberty are in Danger, our wisest and safest Course is, to betake our selves to God in Prayer, *Psal. 62. 8. Trust in him at all Times; ye People, pour out your Hearts before him: God is a Refuge for us. Selah.*

This is the first Means we should use for our Safety; it is not to be deferr'd till we have try'd all other Ways, but with this we should begin, and with this we should go on, then all other proper Endeavours are most like to be successful.

Secondly, Notwithstanding the Excellency of this Duty, there are few Christians so good, but they have need to be quickned and call'd upon to the faithful Performance of it; for tho' the Spirit of Adoption inclines and leads them to their Heavenly Father in Prayer, yet there is that in their own Spirits which often hinders them, *they find a Law, that when they would do Good Evil is present with them, Rom. 7. 21.* The Sin that dwells in them, as a dead Weight, it keeps them down when they would ascend upwards, it pulls them back when they would press forwards; and even, when they think their Hearts are well bent and fix'd, they often find *they are turned aside like a deceitful Bow, Psal. 78. 57.* It is our Duty to be constant in Prayer, even with a Constancy that may be called praying always; but how often are Opportunities for Prayer neglected and lost.

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We are commanded to be instant and fervent in Prayer, since cold Prayers seem only to beg a Denial; but who has not Cause to complain of a sinful Remissness: The prevailing Prayer should be every way, the inwrought and the inworking Prayer, but the due Fervor is often wanting.

Sometimes the Providence of God plainly tells us, it is time for us to seek the Lord, and bids us gather our selves together; but we do not always attend to the Call, nor discern aright the Signs of the Times.

In this Case, it is the Duty both of Magistrates and Ministers, to exhort and require us, that we stir up our selves to take hold on God, and we should conscientiously comply with them, and we should be thankful to God that we have such Monitors, tho' we have reason to be ashamed that we should so much need them. The Primitive Christians could say, they pray'd *sine Monitore quia de pectore*, their own Hearts were instead of Monitors to them; and they should be so to us, but the Weakness of our Faith, the Strength of Corruption, and the Amusements of this vain World, are our great Hindrances in the Duty of Prayer; and we should be thankful to any that shall call upon us as the Sailors to *Jonah*, *What meanest thou O sleeper, awake and call upon thy God*, Chap. 1. 6.

Thirdly, Prayer is a very copious and comprehensive Duty, it takes a great Compass.

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The Charter of Prayer is as large and full as our Hearts can desire, you may find it in *John 16. 23. Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my Name he will give it.*

The Spirit of Prayer is free and flowing, it includes an humble Liberty with the great God, *We have boldness to enter the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus, Heb. 10. 19.* We have a great High Priest that is passed into the Heavens for us, and therefore we may come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in every time of need. God is a bountiful Benefactor, He gives liberally, and upbraids us not with coming too often, or asking too much; and the Spirit of Prayer is not a *Spirit of Bondage*, not a narrow, not a servile Spirit, *but a Spirit of Adoption, enabling us to cry Abba Father, Rom. 8. 15.*

The Sorts and Parts of this Duty are various, we are to pray *always with all manner of Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and to watch thereunto with all perseverance, Eph. 6. 18.* We have in our Text several Words used to express the various Sorts and Parts of this Duty; as Supplications, as *desires*, Deprecations for the averting or removing of Evil, either of Sin or Punishment, Evils either of a temporal or spiritual Nature; and while we are in this evil World, in jeopardy every day and hour, we have often need to dread and deprecate the many great Evils to which we are expos'd; thus our Saviour taught his Disciples to pray daily, that they

they might not be led into Temptation, but deliver'd from Evil ; and thus he himself pray'd for them, John 17. 5. *I pray not that thou should'st take them out of the World, but that thou should'st keep them from the Evil* ; their continuance in the World is necessary for others, but it will be dangerous to themselves ; keep them from the Evil of the World.

Another Sort and Part of this Duty is *Obsecration*, προσευχαι, *Prayers*, Petitions for what is good, Mercy and Grace, to help in time of need, especially spiritual Mercies, seeking first the Kingdom of God and the Righteousness thereof, and then whatever temporal good Things may be fit for us. Our Condition in this World is not only hazardous but necessitous, we have nothing but what God is pleas'd freely to give us, and we must beg our daily Bread from him.

Another thing in Prayer is *Intercession*, we are to pray with and for others ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, our Saviour taught his Disciples to pray, *Our Father*, not to be singular or selfish in Prayer, but to include others, even in our most secret Addresses to God ; indeed we are not worthy to put up one Petition for ourselves, and yet thro' Christ we have the Privilege and Honour conferr'd upon us, to be Intercessors with God for others.

And further, the Duty of Prayer is not complete without *Thanksgivings*, εὐχαριστίας, if this be not properly Prayer, yet it is certainly Adoration, and should always accompany our Supplications ;
if

if God do not hear our Praises for what we have receiv'd, we cannot expect that He should hear our Prayers for what we want, Psal. 65. 1, 2. *Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion, and to thee shall the Vow be performed, O thou that hearest Prayer, to thee shall all Flesh come*; they shall not only come to pray for further Mercy, but to pay their Vows for the Returns of Prayer they have already received from God.

Fourthly, None of the Children of Men are to be denied an Interest in our Prayers; we are not only allowed, but exhorted to *offer up Supplications and Prayers for all Men*. All the Inhabitants of this World, as they are our Fellow Creatures, our Brethren, Partakers of the same Nature; for God hath made of one Blood all Nations of Men, that dwell on all the Face of the Earth: The Spirit of Prayer is a large generous benevolent Spirit, for it is the Spirit of that God who is not willing that any should perish; in this Spirit there is a divine Philantropy, good Will towards Men, even towards all Men.

There are none so good but what need your Prayers; the best have their Wants, their Weaknesses, their Temptations, their Afflictions, and their Corruptions too, which lay them under a Necessity of being much in Prayer themselves, and desiring the Prayers of others. How often do we hear this great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, begging the Prayers of the Churches,

1 *Theff.* 5. 25. Brethren, pray for us; and again,
 2 *Theff.* 3. 1, 2. Finally, Brethren, pray for us, that the
Word of God may have free course, and be glorified, &c.
 And *Heb.* 13. 18. Pray for us, for we trust we have
 a good Conscience in all Things, willing to live honestly;
 and very particularly, *Eph.* 6. 19. having directed them to pray for all the Saints, he adds [as if he were, indeed, less than the least of all the Saints] and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my Mouth boldly to make known the Mystery of the Gospel; and he seems to expect more from the Prayers of the Churches than from his own. *Phil.* 1. 19. For this I know shall turn to my Salvation, through your Prayer, and the Supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

It is certainly a great Advantage to have a general Interest in the Prayers of good People; it is like trading in many Bottoms, which generally produces the safest and speediest Returns: The Merchant that has a Share in many Ships, often hears one or other is arrived, in which he is concerned; and he that has an Interest in the Prayers of many Christians, may expect that every Day will bring him the Returns of one or other of them.

There are none on Earth so bad as to be beyond the reach of our Prayers, at least we cannot know them to be so. *There is a Sin unto Death*, which deprives those that have committed it of the Benefit of the Prayers of the Churches and People of God; but as it is very difficult to understand

stand what the peculiar Nature of that Sin is, so it is, I think, impossible for us to know that any of our Acquaintance have been guilty of it! Some melancholy Christians have been ready to charge themselves with it, which I take to be a good Sign that they are free from that great Transgression; but I have never known any sober Person venture to pronounce another guilty of it.

We know none so bad, but peradventure, God may give them Repentance, and ought to pray that he would do it. Our blessed Lord dyed praying for his Murderers; *Father, forgive them, they know not what they do*; the holy Martyr Stephen, in conformity to his dying Lord, pray'd for those that were stoning him to Death; *Lord, lay not this Sin to their Charge*: These are Examples highly worthy of our Imitation, it is the Glory of the Christian Religion, that it obliges us *to love our Enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us*. Thus approving our selves *to be the Children of God, who maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust*, Matth. 5. 44, 45.

It is our Duty often and earnestly to pray for a lost World, a World that lies in Wickedness, the vast Multitude of miserable Creatures, that sit in Darkness, and in the Region of the Shadow of Death, that the Day spring from on high may visit them, that the Name that is above every Name [the glorious Immanuel, God with us, God manifested

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fested in the Flesh, reconciling the World to himself] may be great among the *Gentiles*, from the rising of the Sun to the going down thereof, since there is no other Name given under Heaven besides this, by which Men can be saved.

It is our Duty to pray often and earnestly for those more guilty and wretched Souls, that sin wilfully against Gospel Light and Knowledge, and do those abominable Things in the very Face of the Sun of Righteousness, that the Pagans would be ashamed of; the Case of such as these is extremely Dangerous; but yet we must not give it up as desperate, while there is Life there is Hope; and while there is any Ground for Hope, there is room for Prayer; indeed to pray for the Dead, as the Papists do, is not only an unwarrantable, but a pernicious Practice: Some may think, if those Prayers do no good, yet they do no harm; but if this Case be well considered, I believe it will appear, that though they can do no good to the Dead, they may do the greatest harm to the Living; as this gives them some Encouragement, to delay their Repentance to the last, by making them believe if Death should overtake them unawares and unprepared, yet they have another Chance for it, and the Matter may be retrieved, by the Merits and Masses, and Prayers of others. This is so far from being Charity, that it is indeed the greatest Cruelty, thus for their own Advantage to delude their ignorant Followers to their Destruction; but we need not be surprized at this, since among the
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Merchandize of Mystical *Babylon*, we find Slaves and Souls of Men; and certainly this Practice I have mentioned, is to make Merchandize of the Souls of Men, having before enslaved them. When once the Souls of Men have left the Body, either they are received up into Heaven, or sent down to a Place, between which and Heaven there is fixed a great and impassable Gulph, that renders the Happiness of the one State, and the Misery of the other, Unchangeable and Eternal.

5. Besides, the general Obligation we are under to pray for all Men, we are especially obliged to pray for Kings and all in Authority. We are obliged to honour the kingly Office as the Ordinance of God, though not exclusive of other Forms of Government; the Gospel is a Law of Liberty, but not of Licentiousness, far from cancelling, it strenghtens the Bonds of Civil Society; they are not the Servants of God, but the Sons of *Belial*, that say of their Rulers, *Let us break their Bands in sunder, and cast away their Cords from us*; the Gospel in the strongest Terms obliges us to be subject to the higher Powers, as being ordained of God, and for our Good, and to be subject not only for *Wrath*, but for *Conscience sake*, Rom. 13. 1, 5. The same Authority that commands us to *fear God*, commands us, in the same Breath, to *honour the King*, and one part of the Honour we owe to Kings is, to pray for them with Thanksgiving.

We are to bless God for civil Government, for the Office of the Magistracy, so necessary for the

publick Peace, Order and Safety; without this there would be none to be *terrors to evil doers*, or *a Praise to those that do well*, every one then will do what seems right in his own Eyes, not judging by Reason, but Lust and Self-Interest; and thus every Thing falls into Confusion and Ruin.

Some talk of a State of Nature, antecedent to that of Government, in which all are equal and on a Level; I know there is a State of Nature in a moral Sense, before Persons are actually brought under the Government of God our Saviour, and I am convinced, that State is very sinful and wretched; but whether there be a State of Nature in a political Sense, I very much doubt, it may perhaps be supposed, as an abstract Notion, and may be the Subject of certain Theories and Speculations; but I question whether ever there was such a Case in fact, I am sure there cannot be in right, any such Numbers of Men, without the distinct Order of Governors and Governed; and if any considerable Body of Men should continue without Government, they would certainly act contrary to the plainest Dictates of right Reason, and the common Interests of Mankind.

I should not have mentioned this, had I not with concern observed, how strangely intoxicated some Persons now are, with the Name and false Notion of Liberty, both in Matters of a religious and secular Nature, in their Zeal against Tyranny, they have run into the contrary Extreme, of an ungovernable Licentiousness, equally unreasonable and pernicious.

icious, as that from which they flee, to the disorderly Patrons of these wild Sentiments, we justly apply the Words of the Apostle *Peter*, Epist. 2. c. 2. *Presumptuous are they, self-will'd, they are not afraid to speak evil of Dignities, but while they promise [others] Liberty, they themselves are the Servants of Corruption.*

And as we ought to bless God for Civil Government of what Form soever, so we ought to pray for Kings and all in Authority; for such Persons having a great and diffusive Interest, are capable of doing a great deal of Good, or a great deal of Mischief in the World, of being great publick Blessings, or publick Calamities. How great a Blessing good Governors are, is elegantly described in 2 Sam. 23. 3, 4. *The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake unto me, He that ruleth over Men must be just, ruling in the fear of God, and he shall be as the Light of the Morning when the Sun riseth, even a Morning without Clouds, as the tender Grass springing out of the Earth by clear shining after Rain.* That is, he shall render his People honourable and prosperous, illustrious and plentiful; upon this, *David* humbly casts himself down at the Foot of God, and owns the failures of his Government, *My house is not so with God.*

The Reverse to this we have in Prov. 28. 15, 16. *As a roaring Lion and a ranging Bear, so is a wicked Ruler over the poor People. The Prince that wanteth Understanding is a great Oppressor.* Now since the Welfare of whole Nations ordinarily depends upon the Temper and Conduct of their Governors, it
must

must needs be the Duty and Wisdom of every one to pray for Kings and all in Authority.

Sixthly and Lastly, One great Reason why we should pray for Kings and all in Authority, is, that under them we may lead quiet and peaceable Lives in all Godliness and Honesty. This is not the only Reason, for our regards to the Honour and Happiness of our Governors should have great Weight with us, there is a dutiful Affection we owe to our Governors as the Fathers of their Country, and should desire every Thing for them, that may encrease their Renown in this World, and their Reward in the other.

But our own Interest obliges us to pray for them, and in doing so, we really pray for our selves.

Obs. 1. We do not pray for Kings, that we may receive Places and Preferments from them, but Protection; not that we may be advanc'd to Offices of Power and Trust, but that we may be quiet and peaceable. It is doubtless the Duty of Subjects to render themselves as capable of serving the Publick as they can, and as worthy of the Honours and Favour of the Government, but it does not become them, *ambire Magistratum*, to aspire to Power to make themselves troublesome to their Superiors by Importunity and Intrusion, but to leave it to them, as the most proper Judges, who they shall think fit to employ. It is natural for Men of aspiring Tempers, to over-value their

own Abilities, as if nothing could be well done without their help. Thus *Absalom* stole away the Hearts of the People by blaming the Administration, and pretending how all their Grievances should be redress'd if he were *but made a Judge in the Land*, 2 Sam. 15. 3, 4. How much more noble was that of *Mephibosheth*, when *Ziba*, by false Suggestions, had gain'd his Birthright, and *David* being convinc'd of it, propos'd the Land should be divided between them. He, like a Son, worthy of *Jonathan*, that most Princely Friend, reply'd, *Forasmuch as my Lord the King is come again in Peace to his own House, let Ziba take all*, 2 Sam. 19. 30. Now for Persons to pray for Kings chiefly that they may be advanc'd by them, is a Design so vain and selfish, as must needs profane and defile their Devotions.

2. Even this Protection they desire no further than as they keep within the Bounds of their Duty, they only desire they may be *quiet* while they are *peaceable*, and exercise themselves in Godliness towards their Maker, and Honesty towards their Fellow-Creatures; they do not desire to be protected in their seditious, profane, and dishonest Practices, they know Sedition, Immorality, and Profaneness, are Faults to be punish'd by the Judges; the height of their Ambition is, that while they are quiet, and study to do their own Business, and to keep a Conscience void of Offence towards God and towards Men, they may be defended from the Insults and Injuries of wicked and unreasonable Men; these are the modest and humble Wishes
of

of the faithful Disciples and Followers of the Lord Jesus, having learned of him to be meek and lowly, they have Reason to expect Rest and Quiet under the Government, and shall be sure to enjoy Rest in their own Souls.

What now remains is, to bring the Matter home to our selves, by applying these Things to the Government under which we live, the equal and gentle Government of our most Gracious Sovereign King George.

I. Let us make Conscience of this Duty of praying for our King constantly and fervently; I would here have those Words of *Job* in my Thoughts, Chap. 32. 22. *I know not how to give flattering Titles, in so doing my Maker would soon take me away.* I doubt not but you are sensible we have a wise and a good King, but yet he is not above the Need of our Prayers, a Crown of Gold often proves to the Head that wears it a Crown of Thorns.

Our King has many Enemies, and those very malicious, tho' he has done the least of any Prince in the World to make himself Enemies, and as much as any ever did to make his Enemies his Friends, yet they cease not to pursue him with unwearied Malice; we ought the more earnestly to pray, that God would always compass him about with his Favour as with a Shield.

He has many great and honourable Designs for the publick Good, and Peace of the World, and of the Churches of God in the World, we ought to pray that God would continually guide and direct him,

I think we may safely pray for him, as the People of *Israel* did for *David*, *Psal. 20. 4. The Lord grant thee according to thine own Heart, and fulfil all thy Counsel.*

He has found us to be too much of a divided discontented Spirit, and therefore has need of Wisdom, as that of an Angel of God, to go in and out before us with an even and steady Conduct.

We are oblig'd to pray that the Royal Family may be blessed of God, their Royal Highnesses, and their illustrious Offspring, that since God alone is that Potentate that hath Immortality, after our Gracious Sovereign hath fulfilled his Days, and serv'd his Generation according to the Will of God, there may never want one of his House to fill the Throne of these Kingdoms, train'd up for Government by affectionate Obedience, and acknowledging that God, by whom Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice.

We are obliged to pray for all in Authority under him, and over us; for those with whom the Administration of publick Affairs is chiefly entrusted; it is the unavoidable Difficulty that Princes, as Men, labour under, that they must see many Things with the Eyes of others, hear with their Ears, and act by their Hands; the Ease of the Prince, and Safety of the People require it; we have reason to pray that God would teach our Senators Wisdom, that those at the Helm may be *Men understanding the Times, and knowing what the Nation ought to do, 1 Chron. 12. 32.* We should not be hasty to take up an evil Re-

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port against those the King thinks fit to employ; the height of their Station makes them to be look'd upon with an invidious Eye, they may certainly claim the Right which every private Person enjoys, to have their Conduct prov'd to be wrong before it be censured as such; Aspersions cast upon them without sufficient Evidence, are not only an Injury to them, but an Affront to him by whom they are employ'd. Our Constitution is so happily fram'd, that unless we be forsaken of God, it cannot fail to secure it self against any unsufferable and fatal Errors in the Administration; in this I think we ought to acquiesce, and not suffer our selves to be misled by the Language or Libels of those who are Enemies to the Ministry, chiefly for their Zeal and Vigilance in the Service of the Government.

2. Our Prayers for the King, and all in Authority, should be attended with Thanksgivings. We have reason to bless God for our Sovereign King George; How well did God provide for these Nations in a very critical Juncture! We might have then fallen into a common Confusion, and like *Israel* in the Captivity, *Hos. 3. 4.* might have remain'd for many Days without a King, without a Prince, without a Sacrifice, without an Ephod, and without Teraphim, without any rightful regular Magistracy or Ministry; but He who is the Ruler among the Nations made good Provision for us, a Prince that was the Son of Nobles, which *Solomon* tells us, is a Blessing, as it prevents that Emulation that always discovers it self in

a Nation, when the Son of a Subject gets into the Throne ; the next Prince in the Protestant Line, descended from a very antient Stem of *British* Kings, and that, by Ancestors that were Confessors for the Reform'd Religion ; one, to whom the Nation was bound to pay their Allegiance by more Laws than one, for many Years before he came into Possession ; and one, whom we could not refuse without involving our selves in Perjury and Rebellion. Himself a rich, powerful and sovereign Prince, invested with more absolute Authority than our Constitution allows, and yet one, who always executed that Power with so much Kindness and Equity, as made him the Father and Delight of his People ; one of mature Age and Experience in Government, Wise and Stedfast, the Happy Root of very numerous and illustrious Branches, a strict Observer of our Laws, and Defender of our Liberty, engaged in the best Alliances, and fought to, as Arbitrator of the contending Princes and Powers of *Europe* ; in a Word, one under whom, if the Fault be not our own, we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty. And therefore,

3. While we are praying and praising God for our Sovereign King *George*, let us be sure faithfully to answer the Design of God in placing us under such a Government. Let it be our conscientious Care to lead a quiet and peaceable Life, let us keep our selves within our Sphere of Action, not exercising our selves in Things too high for us ; let us

not

28 A SERMON preached, &c.

not come near the Tents of Murmurers, nor hear-
ken to those that tell us we are neglected by a Go-
vernment that has befriended us more than any un-
der which we have yet liv'd : *Let us in particular*, al-
ways behave our selves as becomes a dutiful and an
oblig'd People, that we may roll away the Reproach
which has been undeservedly cast upon us, and may
cut off Occasion from those that seek Occasion a-
gainst us.

Above all, let us improve the Quiet and Tranqui-
lity we enjoy, in making suitable Advances in all
practical Godliness, discharging all the Duties of
the first and second Table, walking humbly and
thankfully with our God, uprightly and inoffensive-
ly towards all Men, doing what in us lies to stem
the Torrent of Infidelity and Profaneness, desirous
by our Examples and Prayers to stand in the Gap,
and prevent the Miseries our Sins deserve, and to
which our Follies and our fierce Contentions have
expos'd us, that so we may yet live to see that Pro-
mise fulfill'd to our Land, *Isa. 33. 16.* Wisdom
and Knowledge shall be the Stability of thy Times,
and Strength of Salvation, and the Fear of the Lord,
his Treasure ; but if we should be speedily called
away by Death, and leave our native Land still in
a fluctuating and uncertain State, yet we may be
found prepar'd for a Kingdom that cannot be
moved, and there enjoy perfect Peace and Purity
for ever.